



General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/RES/49/212
17 February 1995

Forty-ninth session
Agenda item 101

RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[on the report of the Third Committee (A/49/611)]

49/212. The plight of street children

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 48/136 of 20 December 1993,

Recalling also Commission on Human Rights resolution 1994/93 of
9 March 1994, 1/

Welcoming the special attention given to the rights of children in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, 2/ in particular in section I, paragraph 21,

Recalling the Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by its resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989, as a major contribution to the protection of the rights of all children, including street children,

Reaffirming that children are a particularly vulnerable group in society whose rights require special protection, and that children living under especially difficult circumstances, such as street children, deserve special attention, protection and assistance from their families and communities and as part of national efforts and international cooperation,

Recognizing that all children have the right to health, shelter and education, to an adequate standard of living and to freedom from violence and harassment,

1/ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1994, Supplement No. 4 (E/1994/24), chap. II, sect. A.

2/ Report of the World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna, 14-25 June 1993 (A/CONF.157/24 (Part I)), chap. III.

Deeply concerned about the growing number of street children worldwide and the squalid conditions in which these children are often forced to live,

Profoundly concerned that the killing of and violence against street children threaten the most fundamental right of all, the right to life,

Alarmed at continuing serious offences of this nature against street children,

Recognizing the duty and responsibility of Governments to investigate all cases of offences against street children and to punish offenders,

Recognizing also that legislation per se is not enough to prevent violations of human rights, including those of street children, and that Governments should implement their laws and complement legislative measures with effective action, inter alia, in the fields of law enforcement and in the administration of justice, and in social, educational and public health programmes,

Welcoming the efforts made by some Governments to take effective action to address the question of street children,

Welcoming also the publicity given to and the increased awareness of the plight of street children, and the achievements of non-governmental organizations in promoting the rights of those children and in providing practical assistance to improve their situation, and expressing its appreciation of their continued efforts,

Welcoming further the valuable work of the United Nations Children's Fund and its National Committees in reducing the suffering of street children,

Noting with appreciation the important work carried out in this field by the United Nations, in particular the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme,

Bearing in mind the diverse causes of the emergence and marginalization of street children, including poverty, rural-to-urban migration, unemployment, broken families, intolerance, exploitation and war, and that such causes are often aggravated and their solution made more difficult by serious socio-economic difficulties,

Recognizing that the prevention and solution of certain aspects of this problem could be facilitated in the context of economic and social development,

Bearing in mind that in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action all States are urged, with the support of international cooperation, to address the acute problem of children in especially difficult circumstances, and that national and international mechanisms and programmes should be strengthened for the defence and protection of children, including street children,

1. Expresses grave concern at the continued growth in the number of incidents worldwide and at reports of street children being involved in and affected by serious crime, drug abuse, violence and prostitution;

2. Urges Governments to continue actively to seek comprehensive solutions to tackle the problems of street children and to take measures to

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restore their full participation in society, and to provide, inter alia, adequate nutrition, shelter, health care and education;

3. Strongly urges all Governments to guarantee the respect for fundamental human rights, particularly the right to life, and to take urgent measures to prevent the killing of street children and to combat torture and violence against them;

4. Emphasizes that strict compliance with the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child constitutes a significant step towards solving the problems of street children, and calls upon all States that have not done so to become parties to the Convention as a matter of priority;

5. Calls upon the international community to support, through effective international cooperation, the efforts of States to improve the situation of street children, and encourages States parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in preparing their reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, to bear this problem in mind and to consider requesting technical advice and assistance for initiatives aimed at improving the situation of street children, in accordance with article 45 of the Convention;

6. Commends the Committee on the Rights of the Child for the attention it pays in its monitoring activities to the situation of children who, to survive, are forced to live and work in the streets, and reiterates its invitation to the Committee to consider the possibility of a general comment on street children;

7. Recommends that the Committee on the Rights of the Child and other relevant treaty-monitoring bodies give attention to this growing problem when examining reports from States parties;

8. Invites Governments, United Nations bodies and organizations, including the United Nations Children's Fund, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to cooperate with each other to ensure greater awareness and more effective action to solve the problem of street children by, among other measures, initiating and supporting development projects that can have a positive impact on the situation of street children;

9. Calls upon special rapporteurs, special representatives and working groups of the Commission on Human Rights and of the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, within their mandates, to pay particular attention to the plight of street children;

10. Decides to consider the question further at its fiftieth session under the agenda item entitled "Promotion and protection of the rights of children".



General Assembly

Distr.
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A/RES/49/213
17 February 1995

Forty-ninth session
Agenda item 102

RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
[on the report of the Third Committee (A/49/612)]

49/213. United Nations Year for Tolerance

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 48/126 of 20 December 1993, by which it proclaimed 1995 the United Nations Year for Tolerance,

Recalling also that the Charter of the United Nations affirms in its preamble that to practise tolerance is one of the principles to be applied to attain the ends pursued by the United Nations of preventing war and maintaining peace,

Stressing that one of the purposes of the United Nations, as set forth in the Charter, is the achievement of international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion,

Mindful of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1/ and of the International Covenants on Human Rights, 2/

Bearing in mind the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, 3/ adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights at Vienna in June 1993,

1/ Resolution 217 A (III).

2/ Resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

3/ Report of the World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna, 14-25 June 1993 (A/CONF.157/24 (Part I)), chap. III.

Convinced that tolerance is the sound foundation of any civil society and of peace,

Bearing in mind its decision 35/424 of 5 December 1980 and Economic and Social Council resolution 1980/67 of 25 July 1980 concerning guidelines for international years and anniversaries,

Noting that the observance of the United Nations Year for Tolerance will not involve any financial implications for the United Nations,

Taking note of the note by the Secretary-General of 30 September 1994 ^{4/} transmitting the report of the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization,

1. Welcomes the fact that the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization will assume the role of lead organization for the United Nations Year for Tolerance;
2. Recommends that the specialized agencies, regional commissions and other organizations of the United Nations system consider in their respective forums the contributions they could make to the success of the Year;
3. Calls upon all Member States to cooperate with the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization in the observance of the national and international programmes for the Year and to participate actively in the implementation of the activities to be organized within the framework of the Year;
4. Invites interested intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to exert efforts in their respective fields to contribute adequately to the programmes for the Year and to the follow-up programme;
5. Requests the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to prepare for the conclusion of the Year a declaration of principles and a programme of action as a follow-up to the Year, and to submit them to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session;
6. Decides to mark the end of the Year at a special commemorative plenary meeting at its fiftieth session and to review the follow-up to the Year at its fifty-first session.

94th plenary meeting
23 December 1994



General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/RES/49/214
17 February 1995

Forty-ninth session
Agenda item 103

RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[on the report of the Third Committee (A/49/613/Add.1)]

49/214. International Decade of the World's
Indigenous People

The General Assembly,

Bearing in mind that one of the purposes of the United Nations, as set forth in the Charter, is the achievement of international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion,

Recognizing the value and diversity of the cultures and the forms of social organization of the world's indigenous people,

Recalling its resolution 48/163 of 21 December 1993, by which it proclaimed the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, commencing on 10 December 1994,

Conscious of the need to improve the economic, social and cultural situation of the indigenous people, with full respect for their distinctiveness and their own initiatives,

Reaffirming that the goal of the Decade is to strengthen international cooperation for the solution of problems faced by indigenous people in such areas as human rights, the environment, development, education and health,

Recalling that, beginning in the first year of the Decade, one day of every year shall be observed as the International Day of Indigenous People,

Welcoming the recommendation of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations of the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities of the Commission on Human Rights that the International Day be observed every year on 9 August, that date being the anniversary of the first day of the meeting of the Working Group in 1982,

Also welcoming the appointment of the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights as Coordinator for the Decade,

Recognizing the importance of considering the establishment of a permanent forum for indigenous people within the United Nations system in the framework of the Decade, and recalling that the Commission on Human Rights, in its resolution 1994/28 of 4 March 1994, 1/ requested the Working Group to give priority consideration to the possible establishment of a permanent forum for indigenous people,

Recalling its request to the Coordinator to coordinate the programme of activities for the Decade in full collaboration and consultation with Governments, competent bodies, the International Labour Organization and other specialized agencies, and indigenous and non-governmental organizations,

Recalling also its request to specialized agencies, regional commissions and other organizations of the United Nations system to consider with Governments and in partnership with indigenous people how they can contribute to the success of the Decade, and welcoming recommendations received in this regard,

Recognizing the importance of consultation and cooperation with indigenous people in planning and implementing the programme of activities for the Decade, the need for adequate financial support from the international community, including support from within the United Nations and the specialized agencies, and the need for adequate coordination and communication channels,

Recalling its invitation to indigenous organizations and other non-governmental organizations to consider the contributions they can make to the success of the Decade, with a view to presenting them to the Working Group on Indigenous Populations,

Taking note of Economic and Social Council decision 1992/255 of 20 July 1992, in which the Council requested United Nations bodies and specialized agencies to ensure that all technical assistance financed or provided by them was compatible with international instruments and standards applicable to indigenous people, and encouraged efforts to promote coordination in this field and greater participation of indigenous people in the planning and implementation of projects affecting them,

Convinced that the development of indigenous people within their countries will contribute to the socio-economic, cultural and environmental advancement of all the countries of the world,

Recognizing that indigenous people can and should be able through appropriate mechanisms to make their distinct contributions to humanity,

1/ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1994, Supplement No. 4 (E/1994/24), chap. II, sect. A.

Mindful of the relevant recommendations of the World Conference on Human Rights, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the International Conference on Population and Development, in particular chapter 26 of Agenda 21 2/ on recognizing and strengthening the role of indigenous people and their communities,

Welcoming the proposal for an Indigenous Youth Cultural Olympics to be held at Manila in 1995, in conjunction with the Decade and the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations,

Determined to promote the enjoyment of the rights of indigenous people and the full development of their distinct cultures and communities,

1. Takes note of the preliminary report of the Secretary-General of 28 September 1994 on a comprehensive programme of action for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People 3/ and the annexes to that report;

2. Decides to adopt the short-term programme of activities for 1995 contained in annex II to the report of the Secretary-General, and invites the Commission on Human Rights, at its fifty-first session, to consider the short-term programme with a view to adjusting or supplementing it if required;

3. Invites Governments to submit written comments to the Secretary-General, by the end of August 1995, on the preliminary report and its annexes, with a view to the preparation of a final comprehensive programme of action for the Decade, to be submitted by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session;

4. Decides that the Decade will have an operational focus to implement its goals and that its theme will be "Indigenous people: partnership in action";

5. Encourages the Commission on Human Rights to consider the draft United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples, contained in the annex to resolution 1994/45 of 26 August 1994 of the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, 4/ with the participation of representatives of indigenous people, on the basis of and in accordance with appropriate procedures to be determined by the Commission, with a view to achieving the adoption of a draft declaration by the General Assembly within the Decade;

6. Recognizes the importance of considering the establishment of a permanent forum for indigenous people within the United Nations during the Decade, as recommended in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, 5/ adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights at Vienna in June 1993, and

2/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992 (Vol.I and Vol.I/Corr.1, Vol.II, Vol.III and Vol.III/Corr.1) (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: Resolutions adopted by the Conference, resolution 1, annex II.

3/ A/49/444.

4/ See E/CN.4/1995/2 - E/CN.4/Sub.2/1994/56.

5/ Report of the World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna, 14-25 June 1993 (A/CONF.157/24 (Part I)), chap. III.

requests the Commission on Human Rights to make recommendations in this regard;

7. Recognizes the importance of strengthening the human and institutional capacity of indigenous people to develop their own solutions to their problems, and for these purposes recommends that the United Nations University consider the possibility of sponsoring, in each region, one or more institutions of higher education as centres of excellence and the diffusion of expertise, and invites the Commission on Human Rights to recommend appropriate means of implementation;

8. Decides that the International Day of the World's Indigenous People shall be observed every year during the Decade on 9 August, requests the Secretary-General to support the observance of the Day, from within existing budgetary resources, and encourages Governments to observe the Day at the national level;

9. Expresses its appreciation for the work undertaken by the Goodwill Ambassador, Rigoberta Menchú Tum, and expresses the hope that she will continue to play an important role in promoting the Decade;

10. Recommends that special attention be given to improving the extent and effectiveness of the participation of indigenous people in planning and implementing the activities for the Decade, including through the recruitment, where appropriate, by relevant United Nations bodies and specialized agencies of staff from among indigenous nationals of Member States, consistent with Article 101 of the Charter of the United Nations, within existing resources, and through consultation with Governments at the national, regional and international levels;

11. Recommends for this purpose that a second technical meeting on the planning of the Decade be convened immediately prior to the thirteenth session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, to be supported from within existing budgetary resources, and urges Governments, United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and, in particular, indigenous people's organizations to participate actively in that meeting, in accordance with agreed procedures;

12. Decides to consider at a later session the convening of meetings for planning and review purposes at appropriate intervals during the Decade, and urges Governments, United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and, in particular, indigenous people's organizations to participate actively in such meetings;

13. Recommends that the Secretary-General:

(a) Establish, during the first quarter of 1995, the Voluntary Fund for the Decade and include that Fund in the annual Pledging Conference for Development Activities held at United Nations Headquarters;

(b) Request United Nations representatives in countries where there are indigenous people to promote, through the appropriate channels, greater participation of indigenous people in the planning and implementation of projects affecting them;

(c) Urge relevant United Nations conferences convened during the Decade to promote and facilitate to the extent possible, and as appropriate, the effective input of the views of indigenous people;

(d) Ensure that information about the programme of activities for the Decade and opportunities for indigenous people to participate in those

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activities is disseminated in all countries and to the greatest possible extent in indigenous languages, to be financed from within existing budgetary resources;

(e) Report to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session on progress made at the national, regional and international levels in accomplishing these objectives;

14. Requests the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to take into account the special concerns of indigenous people and the goals of the Decade in the fulfilment of his functions;

15. Requests the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, bearing in mind the contribution that indigenous people have the capacity to make, to establish a unit within the Centre for Human Rights of the Secretariat to support its activities related to indigenous people, in particular to plan, coordinate and implement activities for the Decade;

16. Invites the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights to consider the appointment of a fund-raiser who could develop new sources of funding for the Decade;

17. Requests the Administrative Committee on Coordination, through its inter-agency process, to consult and coordinate on the Decade, with a view to assisting the Coordinator of the Decade to fulfil his function, and to report on activities of the United Nations system in relation to the Decade to the General Assembly in each year of the Decade;

18. Invites United Nations financial and development institutions, operational programmes and specialized agencies, in accordance with the existing procedures of their governing bodies:

(a) To give increased priority and resources to improving the conditions of indigenous people, with particular emphasis on the needs of those people in developing countries, including by the preparation of specific programmes of action for the implementation of the goals of the Decade, within their areas of competence;

(b) To launch special projects, through appropriate channels and in collaboration with indigenous people, for strengthening their community-level initiatives, and to facilitate the exchange of information and expertise among indigenous people and other relevant experts;

(c) To designate focal points for coordination with the Centre for Human Rights of activities related to the Decade;

19. Encourages Governments to support the Decade by:

(a) Contributing to the United Nations Trust Fund for the Decade;

(b) Preparing relevant programmes, plans and reports in relation to the Decade, in consultation with indigenous people;

(c) Seeking means, in consultation with indigenous people, of giving indigenous people greater responsibility for their own affairs and an effective voice in decisions on matters which affect them;

(d) Establishing national committees or other mechanisms involving indigenous people to ensure that the objectives and activities of the Decade

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are planned and implemented on the basis of full partnership with indigenous people;

20. Also encourages Governments to consider contributing, as appropriate, to the Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean, in support of the achievement of the goals of the Decade;

21. Appeals to Governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to support the Decade by identifying resources for activities designed to implement the goals of the Decade, in cooperation with indigenous people;

22. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fiftieth session the item entitled "Programme of activities of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People".

94th plenary meeting
23 December 1994